

IOWA BIRD LIFE

Summer 1992 Volume 62 Number 3



IOWA ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

IANA BIRD LIFE

Summer 1992

Volume 62, Number 3

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The IOWA ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION, founded in 1923, encourages interest in the identification, study, and protection of birds in Iowa and seeks to unite those who have these interests in common. *Iowa Bird Life* and *I.O.U. News* are quarterly publications of the Union.

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Original manuscripts, notes, letters (indicate if for publication), editorials, and other materials relating to birds and bird finding in Iowa should be sent to the editor. Accepted manuscripts will generally be published promptly, depending on space available, with the following absolute deadlines: 15 November for the Winter issue; 15 February for the Spring issue; 15 May for the Summer issue; and 15 July for the Fall issue. Most manuscripts will be refereed. All material should be typed double-spaced or hand printed in ink on 8 1/2 by 11 inch paper. Authors should pattern their style after a current issue of the journal. If you want more detailed guidelines or advice regarding the appropriateness of your topic for *Iowa Bird Life*, send a self-addressed stamped envelope to the editor. Manuscripts may also be submitted on computer disk (Word 4.0 for Macintosh or compatible programs). Please submit one printed copy of the manuscript with the disk.

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UPCOMING MEETINGS OF IOWA ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

* 14-16 May 1993 , Keosauqua

FIELD REPORTS

Anyone observing birds in Iowa is encouraged to report their findings on a quarterly basis to the Field Reports editors. Sample reporting and documentation forms suitable for duplication are available from the editor (send self-addressed stamped envelope to Jim Dinsmore, 4024 Arkansas Dr., Ames, IA 50010). An article describing the reporting process is also available.

Deadlines for receipt of field reports are as follows:

- *Winter (Dec, Jan, Feb)--3 March (W. Ross Silcock, Box 300, Tabor, IA 51653)
- *Spring (Mar, Apr, May)--3 June (Thomas H. Kent, 211 Richards St., Iowa City, IA 52246)
- *Summer (Jun, Jul)--3 August (James J. Dinsmore, 4024 Arkansas Dr., Ames, IA 50010)
- *Fall (Aug, Sep, Oct, Nov)--3 December (Thomas H. Kent, 211 Richards St., Iowa City, IA 52246)

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

*Deadline for receipt of reports: 15 January. For forms and instructions write: W. Ross Silcock, Box 300, Tabor, IA 51653.

IOWA BIRDLINE 319-338-9881

The birdline is a recorded summary of interesting recent bird sightings in Iowa. At the end of the report you can leave a message and report recent sightings. Be sure to give your name and phone number as well as the location of the bird and date seen. Call in as soon as possible after sighting a rare bird. Jim Fuller checks the reports daily and updates the recording on Monday, so make sure Sunday sightings are reported by Sunday night.

I.O.U. NEWS

Send items of interest for the newsletter to the editors (J. Hank and Linda Zaletel, 715 West St., Colo, IA 50056).

MATERIALS AVAILABLE

The following materials may be obtained by writing the editorial office (Iowa Bird Life, 4024 Arkansas Dr., Ames, IA 50010):

*Order form for back issues of *Iowa Bird Life*: send self-addressed stamped envelope.

*Field Checklist of Iowa Birds--1992 Edition: 6 for \$1.00, postpaid. Also available at annual meetings.

REPORTING NEBRASKA BIRDS

Sightings of Nebraska birds, including those within the Nebraska portion of DeSoto N.W.R., should be reported to Loren and Babs Padelford, 1405 Little John Road, Bellevue, NE 68005. Formats for reporting and documentation are the same as for Iowa. The Nebraska Bird Line, available 24 hours a day, is 402-292-5325. Iowa birders are encouraged to report their Nebraska sightings to this number.

ADDRESS CHANGES

Please send address changes/corrections to Pam Allen, 1601 Pleasant St., West Des Moines, IA 50265.

ISSN 0021-0455

IN MEMORIAM: FRED J. PIERCE

ROBERT F. VANE

The last charter member of the Iowa Ornithologists' Union, Fred John Pierce, 89, died on 6 May 1992 in a Cedar Rapids care center. Fred will be remembered with affection and respect by all who knew him.

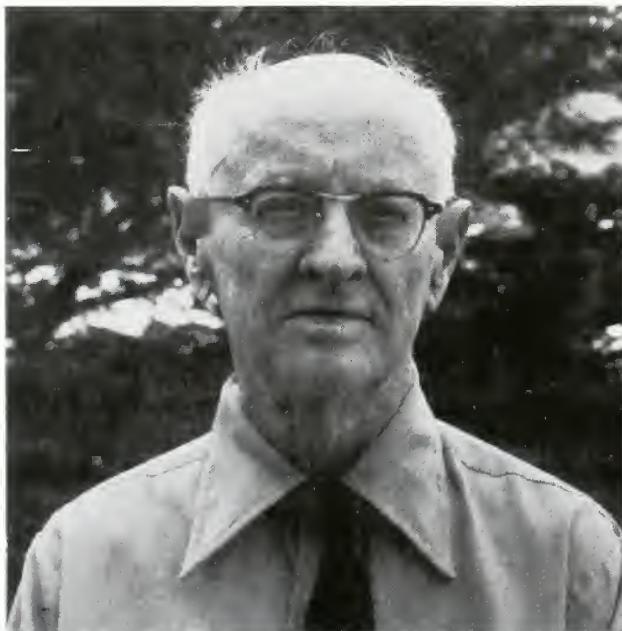
Fred was born on the Pierce family farm, southeast of Winthrop, Iowa, 6 July 1902. His parents were John Miles Pierce and Maude Stoneman Pierce. He was educated in the public schools and graduated from Gates Business College in Waterloo in 1925.

He married Reva Mae Norman in 1926. A son, Paul, died in 1970 and a daughter, Florence J. Fuessley, resides in Alburnett. Also surviving are five grandchildren.

As a young man Fred worked on the family farm, and later farmed for himself nearly 20 years. He was also a newspaper reporter and did office work for a time. In the years 1951 through 1964 he worked for the Biology Section of the Iowa Conservation Commission in the area office in Independence.

Fred became interested in birds and nature after reading Ernest Thompson Seton's "Two Little Savages" when he was about 13 years old. He was a bird and book enthusiast the rest of his life.

Fred was a charter member of the I.O.U. which was organized in 1923. He became editor of *Iowa Bird Life* in 1931 starting it as Volume 1, No. 1 with its new name. Previously the publication of the I.O.U. was edited by Dr. F. L. R. Roberts on a letter-size sheet under the title *Bulletin of the Iowa Ornithologists' Union*. Pierce retired as editor of *Iowa Bird Life* in 1960 after completing 30 full years. It must be remembered that Reva, his wife, read proof for nearly every issue during the 30 years of the Pierce editorship. He and his wife were Honorary Life Members of the I.O.U. In 1950 he was voted an Elective Member of the American Ornithologists' Union.



*Fred J. Pierce, 1986.
Photograph by Bob Broden.*

He published more than 500 long and short articles on Iowa birds. These included bird notes, obituaries, book reviews, and editorial notes in *Iowa Bird Life*.

Fred's editorship meant a great deal to him as shown in this quote from a letter from Fred Pierce to the author 20 May 1970:

"My policy was to slant it (*Iowa Bird Life*) toward the rather amateurish group that composed the greater part of our membership with informal notes, as many pictures as possible, and a personal atmosphere that would help to hold the little organization together. Certainly we went through some trying years, as I started it off in the days of the depression, when we had a small group with very little income and no bank surplus to draw on. The journal and the organization proved to have staying power."

"At my retirement in 1960, I received many nice letters from members, all of whom said I had done a good job. I have preserved these carefully, and one that I particularly treasure was from the late Dr. George Hendrickson [editor's note-longtime Professor of Zoology at Iowa State University]. He said, in part:

'I read you have resigned the editorship of *Iowa Bird Life*. Thirty years of your work, without controversy, free of any petty and irrelevant works by you, speak more highly for you than I can state. To manage a magazine for amateurs and scientists with the highest of regard by all is a truly significant accomplishment for so many years.'

"He was a past president, and the one who held office in the depression years. We had worked together when things were tough, and what he said meant a lot to me."



Fred Pierce (left) with Harold Ennis in Pierce's library, 14 June 1959, Winthrop, IA.
Photograph by Thomas Kent.



Fred Pierce (left) with Philip DuMont at I.O.U. meeting in Cedar Falls, 6 Sep 1986.
Photograph by Thomas Kent.

In 1944, Pierce became a bookseller and carried on this work for 35 years under the name Pierce Book Company, a name adopted in 1950. The Pierce Book Company, of course, specialized in natural history books, many of which were out of print and were avidly sought in the second-hand book market. Two catalogues a year were issued-spring and fall-the size up to 44 pages and editions up to 14,000 copies. The

catalogues were a mine of bibliographical information, with many customers saving them, some customers even binding them.

The book business was a thriving one, and Fred sold books all over the world. Fred told the author that his largest order was in the range of \$8,000, and further that his well-wrapped packages mailed from the Winthrop Post Office had caused that institution to be upgraded to the next highest category. In later years the entire air-conditioned, humidity-controlled basement of their Winthrop home was the office and storeroom for their book business. Many pleasant hours were spent there visiting the Pierces surrounded by all those wonderful books.

Fred's private library was comprehensive and well planned. It contained about 2,000 bound books and hundreds of smaller publications and bird periodicals. Included were complete bound sets of many of the major bird serials as well as those no longer published. Book collecting was a main hobby through much of his adult life.

Early memories of Fred included his reports of crossbills in the evergreens near the State Hospital in Independence. These reports led to our field trips to that area.

The Pierces were ever considerate of the I.O.U. and year after year they would have tables of new ornithology and natural history books on display at our spring meetings. The Pierces initiated the Union's fall meetings. In fact, the first three fall meetings were held at their Winthrop home in 1947, 1948, and 1949, happy occasions indeed.

At the 48th annual Spring convention of the I.O.U., held at Iowa Wesleyan College in Mt. Pleasant in May of 1970, Fred was honored by our Union. A citation was read and presented to him for his long-term editorship of *Iowa Bird Life* and for his service to our organization dating from his charter membership. Two color prints taken by Fred Kent were presented to Mr. Pierce as a token of appreciation.

Our last visit with Fred was in the care center in Cedar Rapids, and we remember with much pleasure the animated conversation concerning birds, books, and people. As we took our leave he said, "It's great to speak the same lingo."

At his funeral service in Winthrop on 9 May 1992, Fred had requested this reading:

"My friends grow older, cities change, and rural scenes alter with the years. But birds are always the same. The birds I see today are exactly like the ones I saw when I was a boy roaming the woods for the first time."

To me, birds embody the spirit of eternal youth. They are always young-always free."

And further at his graveside, "Don't weep for me, I am not there."

We will miss this intelligent, friendly man with his vast knowledge of natural history books. We can only write that it was a privilege to have known him.

2220 Grand Avenue SE, Cedar Rapids, IA 52403

Editor's note: The Pierce bookselling business was described in detail in Iowa Bird Life 57:106-111, 1987.

HOW THE GOLDFINCH BECAME IOWA'S STATE BIRD

HANK ZALETEL

In February 1926, Iowa Ornithologists' Union (IOU) president Walter Rosene noted in a letter to members that Nebraska had recently named a state bird. He wrote that "if each state has its state flower why should we not have a state bird? It would be interesting to hear from all members in regard to this matter and I would welcome letters offering suggestions."

Two months later he wrote that a few suggestion had been received but not enough to reach a consensus. Margo Frankel from Des Moines wrote: "choose an all year round bird for Iowa-Downy Woodpecker or Chickadee." Althea Sherman of National suggested the Goldfinch "a beautiful bird, easily recognized by everyone, it is of common occurrence in most parts of our state throughout the whole year." Rosene suggested more nominations and that possibly this matter could be discussed at the spring meeting in Atlantic.

No further action was taken on this matter until June of 1931 when Dr. F. L. R. Roberts, in a president's letter to the membership, wrote that "there is a popular demand for a state bird and it is appropriate that we should be active in choosing one." He then appointed a committee, consisting of two former IOU presidents, Walter Bennett and Walter Rosene, to prepare recommendations to be presented at the next annual meeting.

The next spring at the banquet, members prepared a slate of birds for consideration. After much debate, the Goldfinch was selected and was unanimously voted as the IOU's choice for state bird. It was chosen because it was commonly known and by the fact that it was found in the state year around.

Former IOU president Arthur Palas was chosen as chair of a committee to present this petition to the Iowa Legislature in January 1933, when it reconvened. J. Wilbur Dole recalled that Mr. Palas had approached him during the first week of March to present this matter. Mr. Palas, it seems, had forgotten his assignment until this late date in the session. Palas had wanted a bill to be entered but Dole believed it to be too late in the session for it to succeed.

J. Wilbur Dole was born on 7 February 1869 in Jefferson County. He was a prominent Fairfield civic leader and a member of the Iowa Academy of Science and the American Association for the Advancement of Science. He was elected to the Iowa House for the 1933/34 session from the Fairfield area. He was the only member of the Iowa Legislature at that time to be a member of the IOU. He died on 17 July 1949 at the age of 80.

Dole recalled that the wild rose was the state flower but he did not know the process by which it was declared. After some research, he discovered that it had been designated by concurrent resolution of the Iowa Legislature in 1897. He decided to use the same procedure for designating the Goldfinch as state bird. He prepared the resolution and filed it on 16 March but delayed calling it up until 21 March, Iowa Bird Day.

Several members of the legislature approached him and asked why such birds as the robin, bluebird, or quail should not be considered. He stated that other states had already selected those; no one pressed the matter further. Others asked why we even needed a state bird. He replied that there were only four other states that did not have a state bird. This answer seemed to satisfy their queries.

On 21 March, Dole called up the resolution and spoke in favor of its passage. It carried without opposition and without a vote. He made the only speech in support of the resolution; none was made in opposition. Similar action was taken in the Senate.

A revealing glimpse of how our perceptions of birds have changed can be seen by reading the by-line and story in the 27 March 1933 Des Moines Register's article about Iowa's new state bird. It read: "Goldfinch, Iowa's Official Bird, Is an Aid to Farmer." Further into the story it stated: "the Goldfinch is valuable to farmers because of the great quantity of weed seed they consume during a season and the war they wage upon cankerworms, plant lice, small grasshopper and beetles." Few people, in my estimation, view Goldfinches or birds in general in this manner now.

The text of the resolution adopted by the Iowa Legislature is as follows:

Whereas, the twenty-sixth General Assembly of the state of Iowa, in the year 1897, by concurrent resolution, adopted the wild rose as the state flower of Iowa, the record of which is duly recorded in Senate Journal, pages 1124 and 1164 and in House Journal, page 1025; and

Whereas, many states have not only adopted certain named flowers as their state flower, but have also adopted certain named birds as their state birds, and

Whereas, the Iowa Ornithologist's Union, an association comprising students and lovers of birds, residing within our state, at their annual meeting held in Des Moines, in May, 1932, by resolution and vote, designated the Eastern Goldfinch as their choice for a state bird, and recommended that said Eastern Goldfinch be adopted as the official state bird of Iowa, therefore

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives, the Senate concurring, that the Eastern Goldfinch, *Spinus tristis tristis*, is hereby designated and shall hereafter be officially known as the state bird of Iowa.

Much of the information for this article came from a booklet entitled "The Goldfinch: Official Iowa Bird" written by Josephine Baumgarter and Mabel Goshorn Tate, then editors of the Des Moines Audubon Society's newsletter and published on 29 May 1945. J. Wilbur Dole's account of the events is included in a letter to the editors of the newsletter.

715 West St., Colo, IA 50056

REPORT OF THE RECORDS COMMITTEE FOR 1991

THOMAS H. KENT

The Records Committee reviewed 48 records from 1991. Of these, 32 were accepted and 16 were not. Garganey, Iceland Gull, Marbled Murrelet, and Common Ground-Dove were added to the state list.

Committee members for 1991 with years in which their terms expire were: Francis L. Moore (1992), Mark Proescholdt (1993), Eugene Armstrong (1994), Robert I. Cecil (1995), Tanya E. Bray (1996), Raymond L. Cummins (1997), and Thomas H. Kent (secretary, appointed by the committee in September 1991 to replace Carl Bendorf).

No business, other than appointment of a new secretary and review of records, was carried out in 1991.

Records are classified as follows: A = accepted (-S = specimen, -P = photograph, -D = documentation, -E = possible escaped or introduced bird) and NA = not accepted. References to *IBL* are the page of the Field Reports in *Iowa Bird Life* where the record is cited or to cover photographs. References to American Birds are to the page for photographs. P- numbers refer to the I.O.U. Photo File entry number. The dates given are for documentations and do not necessarily mean that the bird was not seen before or after these dates. Future published notes will contain more details. An * indicates a previously uncited documentation.

1991 RECORDS ACCEPTED

Pacific Loon: A bird in basic plumage was documented at Pleasant Creek S.P. from 9 to 19 Nov (*IBL* 62:12).

Tricolored Heron: A molting first-year bird was at IPL Ponds in Pottawattamie Co. on 4 May (*IBL* 61:89, Greer 1992).

Garganey: A male was at IPS Ponds in Woodbury Co. on 11 May (*IBL* 61:90).

Eurasian Wigeon: A male was at Riverton A. on 6 Mar (*IBL* 61:90, Dinsmore 1992).

Mississippi Kite: A pair in Clive was documented from 22 Jun to 21 Jul and photographed (*IBL* 61(3) cover, 61:114, P-0316), but remained into late August (*IBL* 62:13).

Black-necked Stilt: There was no identification problem with this bird, which was documented at Synder's Bend from 6 to 14 Apr. (*IBL* 61:92, Huser 1992).

Whimbrel: One was at IPS Ponds in Woodbury Co. on 13 May (*IBL* 61:92).

Ruff: A male in "rough" plumage was carefully studied nw. of Bayard in Greene Co. on 26 May (*IBL* 61:92).

Red Phalarope: An adult nearly molted to basic plumage was at Saylorville Res. on 4 Aug (*IBL* 62:15, Dinsmore 1992). Photographs (P-0308) were supportive but not judged to be diagnostic. A juvenile partially molted to basic plumage was documented at Saylorville Res. from 25 to 29 Sep and photographed at close range (P-0299, P-0308, *Am. Birds* 46:168, *IBL* 62:15, 62(2) cover, Proescholdt 1992). A bird at Saylorville Res. on 26 Oct was probably a juvenile with nearly completed molt to basic plumage (*IBL* 62:15, Proescholdt 1992).

Laughing Gull: A juvenile at Saylorville Res. on 15 Jul may have been the same bird documented and photographed at Red Rock Res. from 17 Jul to 6 Aug (P-0307, *IBL* 61:115, 62:15). A first-summer/second-winter bird was at Red Rock Res. on 6 Aug (*Stephen J. Dinsmore).

Thayer's Gull: First-winter birds were at Red Rock Res. on 14-15 Mar (*IBL* 61:93), 24 Oct (*IBL* 62:15), and 7 Dec (*IBL* 62:55); at Des Moines on 30 Nov (*IBL* 62:55), and Lock and Dam 15 on 31 Dec (*IBL* 62:55). A second-winter bird was at Red Rock Res. on 25-28 Nov (*IBL* 62:15). Starting in 1992, the committee will defer evaluations of this species to Field Reports editors, who will still need documentation for acceptance.

Iceland Gull: A bird in transition from first-winter to first-summer plumage was documented and photographed at Red Rock Res. from 13 to 16 Mar (P-0320, *Tim Schantz, *Jim Fuller, *T. H. Kent, *Ann Johnson, *Stephen J. Dinsmore, *Jim Dinsmore, *Diane C. Porter, *Jim

Sinclair, *Mark Proescholdt, *Beth Proescholdt). This bird was an identification problem because its tail band raised the possibility of Thayer's Gull and its light head raised the possibility of Herring Gull. Our outside consultant, Kevin J. Zimmer, gave strong support for the identification. A first-winter bird was found at Lock and Dam 14 on 31 Dec (and 1 Jan 1992) (*IBL* 62:55).

Lesser Black-backed Gull: Adults were at Sabula on 10 Mar (*IBL* 61:93) and Coralville Res. on 28 Nov (*IBL* 62:15, Fuller and Fuller 1992).

Great Black-backed Gull: A second-year bird at Bettendorf on 14, 17 Jan was likely the same bird seen at Keokuk on 7, 8 Feb (*IBL* 61:57, Kent 1992).

Sabine's Gull: An adult and juvenile were photographed at Davenport/Bettendorf on 13-14 Oct (P-0294, P-0300, P-0306, P-0311, *IBL* 62:15, 62(1) cover, *Am. Birds* 46:169). The adult was documented to 26 Oct.

Marbled Murrelet: This very rare vagrant, probably of the Asiatic race, was seen at Red Rock Res. on 12 Dec (*Stephen J. Dinsmore, *IBL* 62:56).

Common Ground-Dove: One was documented and photographed at Cedar Rapids on 24-27 Oct (P-0295, P-0312, *IBL* 62:16).

Rock Wren: Two were found in a garage on 17 Sep in Red Oak (*IBL* 62:17, Carlisle 1992).

Townsend's Warbler: A single observer provided extensive details of one at Stone P. in Woodbury Co. on 11 May (*IBL* 61:95).

Western Tanager: A male was observed and photographed at Red Rock Res. on 7 May (P-0304, *IBL* 61:96).

1991 RECORDS NOT ACCEPTED

Black-shouldered Kite: There are few records of this non-migratory species in the Midwest. The observer had an incomplete view of the bird over a 2-minute period, but did see the highly characteristic black carpal spots (*IBL* 61:91). The committee took the conservative view on a split vote.

Mississippi Kite: Two reports of flybys, each seen for only a few seconds, could have been this species (*IBL* 61:91).

Swainson's Hawk: A winter bird was likely some other species (*IBL* 62:54).

Ferruginous Hawk: Krider's Red-tailed Hawk was a likely possibility based on the description (*IBL* 61:91).

Gyrfalcon: A report lacked descriptive details (*IBL* 62:54).

Black Rail: Two responses to a tape documented by one of three observers presented the committee with a difficult decision, and the majority took a conservative view.

Laughing Gull: A June bird was not seen well (*IBL* 62:15).

Thayer's Gull: The three unaccepted birds could have been this species, but the details provided were not conclusive (*IBL* 61:57, 62:49, 55).

Western Gull: A bird was likely the same as the second-winter Great Black-backed Gull noted above (*IBL* 61:57).

Lesser Black-backed Gull: A bird was likely the same as the second-winter Great Black-backed Gull noted above (*IBL* 61:57).

Any species: Although seen by an observer familiar with this species, the viewing time and details were not conclusive (*IBL* 62:16).

Western Wood-Pewee: A fall bird was identified by voice (*IBL* 62:16). Some committee members were concerned that a juvenile Eastern Wood-Pewee could sound like a Western Wood-Pewee and would like to have a recording to substantiate such a rare occurrence.

Fish Crow: The calls and circling behavior reported at a reasonable date and location by an observer experienced with this species were strongly suggestive (*IBL* 61:94). The committee felt that multiple observations and sound recordings would likely be needed for conclusive proof of this species in Iowa.

LITERATURE CITED

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Dinsmore, S. J. 1992. Eurasian Wigeon at Riverton Wildlife Area. *Iowa Bird Life* 62:83.

Fuller, J., and K. Fuller. 1992. Lesser Black-backed Gull at Sabula. *Iowa Bird Life* 62:90-91.

Greer, J. G. 1992. Tricolored Heron in Pottawattamie County. *Iowa Bird Life* 62:88-89.

Huser, B. 1992. Black-necked Stilt in Woodbury County. *Iowa Bird Life* 62:84-85.

Kent, T. H. 1992. Second-year Great Black-backed Gull on the Mississippi River. *Iowa Bird Life* 62:89-90.

Proescholdt, M. 1992. Two More Red Phalaropes at Saylorville Reservoir. *Iowa Bird Life* 62:87-88.

211 Richards St., Iowa City, IA 52246



*Northern Saw-whet Owl, Moorhead Park,
Ida County. Photo by Don Poggensee*

FIELD REPORTS--SPRING 1992

THOMAS H. KENT, JAMES L. FULLER, AND CARL J. BENDORF

WEATHER

March contributed to the first three months of 1992 being the fourth warmest in 120 years. The first nine days were warmer than the middle of the month. March is typically one of the windier months, but major late winter storms avoided the state this year, and wind speeds averaged 15% lower than usual. Snowfall averaged only 2.3 inches or about one-third of normal.

Although colder than normal, April continued a string of seven consecutive months with above average precipitation, most of which came between the 10th and 23rd. Minor flooding occurred on many of Iowa's rivers and creeks. The major event was the big snow storm that buried far western Iowa under as much as 14 inches on the 21st. The storm was concentrated in a narrow band from Plymouth County southward to Fremont and Page counties.

The major feature of May was the development of very dry conditions, especially over southeastern Iowa. This was the sixth driest May in 120 years. The last nine days of the month were very cold with widespread frost on the 27th.



Tom Kent



Jim Fuller



Carl Bendorf

Temperature and Precipitation with Deviation from Normal

	Temperature, F		Precipitation inches	
	Mean	(Deviation)	Mean	(Deviation)
March	39.5	(+5.6)	2.26	(+0.11)
April	47.0	(-2.3)	3.60	(+0.41)
May	61.1	(+0.3)	1.76	(-2.20)
Jan-May			10.03	(-1.21)

This weather summary is based on reports prepared by state climatologist, Harry Hillaker of the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship.

GENERAL TRENDS

The warm winter and early spring brought waterfowl into the state early. A number of long-distance migrants such as Forster's Tern, Common Nighthawk, Bank Swallow, Barn Swallow, and Hooded Warbler set early records. The April snow in western Iowa may have been responsible for sightings of Smith's and Chestnut-collared longspurs. Observers spent considerable time in southeast and southwest Iowa, producing a number of new early dates. Owing to low water, shorebirds were concentrated at Riverton and Runnells areas. A number of waterfowl, shorebirds, and passerines lingered late in May. Warblers dribbled through in small numbers with some early and late records.

UNUSUAL SIGHTINGS

Accidental species reported included Brown Pelican, Eurasian Wigeon, Mississippi Kite, Ferruginous Hawk, Black Rail, Snowy Plover, Black-necked Stilt, Little Gull, Say's Phoebe, Baird's Sparrow, and Chestnut-collared Longspur. American Swallow-tailed Kite, a species considered extirpated from the state, appeared for the first time in more than 60 years. Casual species included Whimbrel, Red Knot, Great Black-backed Gull, Townsend's Solitaire, and Great-tailed Grackle. Rare species included an ibis, two record late Oldsquaws, a rare spring Black Scoter, a record late Golden Eagle, a "Caribbean" coot, a rare spring Black-legged Kittiwake, and Smith's Longspur.

SPECIES DATA (* = documented, [] = record dates, m. ob. = many observers)

Common Loon: The first was in Mills Co. on 25 Mar (DLR). The peak was 38 at Rathbun Res. on 30 Mar (AMJ). The last was at L. Ahquabi on 20 May (JSi).

Pied-billed Grebe: The first were on 3 Mar at Princeton M. (PCP) and Ida Co. (PE). Peaks were 48 at L. Manawa on 24 Apr (BKP) and 20 at Cedar L. on 26 Apr (DLD).

Horned Grebe: 4 were at Cedar L. on 9 Mar (DLD)[3rd earliest]. From 1 to 8 were reported from 12 other locations through 7 May.

Eared Grebe: The first was at Rathbun Res. on 14 Mar (RLC)[ties earliest]. The peak was 6 at Grover's L. in Dickinson Co. on 16 May (LAS). The last were a pair at Ventura M. on 27 May (RG). Among the 14 other locations the following were in E Iowa: L. Macbride on 19 Mar (JLF), Kalona on 9 May (DCP), and Marshalltown on 23 Apr (MPr). At Silver L. in Worth Co. on 11 May 4 pairs were in courtship display (DeC).

Western Grebe: 4 were at Hendrickson M. on 9 Apr (Raquel Leyva fide JJD)[ties 3rd earliest]. Other reports were from Pleasant Creek L. on 25 Apr (JiD, JLF, THK), Crawford Creek R.A. in Ida Co. on 1 May (PE), L. Manawa on 6 May (BKP), Silver L. in Worth Co. on 11 May (DeC), and Little Clear L. on 21 May (MMB).

American White Pelican: The first were 8 at Rathbun Res. on 10 Mar (RLC)[ties earliest]. More than 100 were seen at 10 locations, with the peak of 1,200 at Union Slough N.W.R. on 28 Apr (MCK). Many more than usual were seen in E Iowa.

Brown Pelican: 1 was at DeSoto N.W.R. from at least 6 to 11 May (*BJR-photo, *THK-photo, *JLF, *PCP-photo). Another report will be referred to the Records Committee.

Double-crested Cormorant: 2 were at Runnells A. on 2 Mar (AMJ). The largest number reported was 1,210 at L. Manawa on 27 Apr (BKP). Nest building was noted at Union Slough N.W.R. on 28 Apr (MCK).

American Bittern: The first was at Otter Creek M. on 20 Apr (MPr) and 6 were there on 25 Apr (JLF). Other reports were 1 at Marshalltown on 23 Apr (MPr), 1 at Pickerel L. on 1 May (MMB), and 2 in Palo Alto Co. on 20 May (Julie Schreiber and Kris Van Rees fide JJD).

Least Bittern: Singles were at Cone M. on 11 May (THK), Union Slough N.W.R. on 22 May (MCK), and Snake Creek M. on 29 May (JSi, EuA/EIA).

Great Blue Heron: 1 was at Riverton A. on 1 Mar (JSi). The peak was 133 at Coralville Res. on 31 May (JiD). At Brenton Sl. 6 nests were found on 17 Apr (JSi). At Saylorville Res., 194 nests were occupied by 5 May (BE).

Great Egret: The first were on 28 Mar with 3 at Lansing (DeC) and 1 at Saylorville Res. (BE). Largest numbers were 40 at Cardinal M. on 25 Apr (DeC) and 32 at Algona on 11 Apr (MCK).

Little Blue Heron: Adults were reported from Burlington on 19 Apr (JLF), n. of Montrose (2) on 26 Apr (THK, RIC), L. Ahquabi on 1 May (JSi), and Cardinal M. on 1 May (DeC).

Cattle Egret: The first was at L. Manawa on 17 Apr (BKP). From 1 to 12 were noted at 12 other locations across the state, which is more than have been found in recent years.

Black-crowned Night-Heron: The first were 5 at Riverton A. on 12 Apr (THK). From 1 to 12 were seen at 7 other locations.

Yellow-crowned Night-Heron: 2 first-year birds were s. of Burlington on 19 May (JLF, THK).

Ibis species: 1 was at Otter Creek M. on 30 Apr (*JLF).

Tundra Swan: Reports were of 6 in Kossuth Co. from 13 to 26 Mar (MCK), 1 at Virgin L. in Palo Alto Co. on 15 Mar (LAS), and 1 at Cone M. from 28 Mar to 4 Apr (THK, JLF).

Trumpeter Swan: 2 with wing tags were in W Cerro Gordo Co. from 6 to 17 Mar (JLW, DRP), and 1 without tags was in Emmet Co. on 23 Apr (JJD).

Mute Swan: 1 was w. of Spencer from 12 to 30 May (LAS). [record latest, if wild, see COMMENT].

Greater White-fronted Goose: Many were reported across the state with a peak of 1,000 in Fremont Co. on 12 Apr (THK). The last was at Hamburg on 13 May (THK).

Snow Goose: 2 were still present at Riverton A. on 31 May (THK).

Ross's Goose: 1 was in Kossuth Co. on 1 Mar (MCK)[3rd earliest]. Other reports were 1 at Cone M. on 6 Mar (THK), 4 at McCord P. and Lakin Sl. on 20 Mar (THK), 1-3 at Hamburg from 12 Apr to 23 May (THK, DRP)[record latest], Cerro Gordo Co. on 13 Apr (CN), and De Soto N.W.R. on 6 May (BKP)[record latest]. Birds intermediate in size between Snow and Ross's geese could have been hybrids (THK, DRP).

Green-winged Teal: The peak was 400 at Forney L. on 6 Mar (BKP). The last were 2 at Coralville Res. on 21 May (THK).

American Black Duck: The last were 2 at Cardinal M. on 25 Apr (DeC).

Northern Pintail: A male remained at Coralville Res. on 30 May (DRP, THK).

Blue-winged Teal: The first on 3 Mar were at Runnells A. (JSI) and Princeton M. (PCP).

Cinnamon Teal: Singles were at Forney L. on 6-7 Mar (DLR, BKP)[ties 2nd earliest], at Bartlett on 15 Mar (DLR)(possibly the same bird as the one at Forney L.), at McCord P. on 16 Mar (AMJ), at Elk Creek W.A. on 12 Apr (*DBo), and Brenton Sl. on 17 Apr (JSI).

Northern Shoveler: The first were 50 at Princeton M. on 3 Mar (PCP). The peak was 267 at Johnston on 19 Apr (BE).

Gadwall: Peaks were 280 at Rathbun Res. on 21 Mar (RLC) and 300 at L. Manawa on 13 Apr (BKP).

Eurasian Wigeon: Single males were s. of Ventura in Cerro Gordo Co. on 18 Mar (*DRP) and nw. of Palo in Linn Co. on 24-28 Apr (*JiD-photo, *THK, *JLF, *RIC).

American Wigeon: 1 remained at Coralville Res. on 30 May (THK).

Canvasback: The peak was 500 at Union Slough N.W.R. on 22 Mar (MCK). One was still at Cone M. on 21 May (JLF).

Redhead: 3 pairs were at Union Slough N.W.R. on 22 May (MCK).

Ring-necked Duck: The peak was 1,800 at Algona on 22 Mar (MCK).

Greater Scaup: The first were 3 at Clear L. on 1 Mar (JLW-details). The last were 2 at Green Is. on 7 May (PCP-details). From 1 to 10 were reported from 10 other locations.

Lesser Scaup: 1,000 were at L. Manawa on 29 Mar (BKP).

Oldsquaw: A winter-plumaged male was at Union Grove S.P. on 13 Apr (MPr). A female in alternate plumage was at Pleasant Creek L. from 3 to 8 May (*DRP, JLF)[3rd latest]. Another bird was at Little Wall L. from 9 to 12 May (AMJ, EuA/EIA)[record latest].

Black Scoter: 1 was at IPL Ponds from 23 to 25 Apr (BKP, DLR)[2nd latest, 5th spring record].

Surf Scoter: A female or immature was at Clear L. on 12 Apr (JLW).

Common Goldeneye: The last was in Johnson Co. on 18 Apr (JLF).

Bufflehead: The first were at L. Manawa on 6 Mar (BKP).

Common Merganser: An injured male remained at Coralville Res. on 30 May (*DRP).

Red-breasted Merganser: The first were at Clear L. on 1 Mar (JLW). The peak was 276 at Saylorville Res. on 29 Mar (BE).

Ruddy Duck: On 6 Mar, 4 were at L. Manawa (BKP), 1 was at Badger Creek L. (PA/RA), and 3 were at Pleasant Creek L. (DRP)[tie 3rd earliest].

Turkey Vulture: The first was at Coralville Res. on 2 Mar (DLD), and 32 were kettling n. of Iowa City on 5 Mar (JLF). There were four other sightings in the first week of March.

Osprey: The first was at Clear L. on 6 Mar (RG)[2nd earliest]. All others were from April except for 1 at Croton Unit of Shimek F. on 19 May (THK).

American Swallow-tailed Kite: 1 at Hartman Reserve in Cedar Falls on 14-15 May (*KAM, *FLM) is the first report in more than 60 years.

Mississippi Kite: 3 returned to Clive on 12 May (EuA/EIA), and 2 remained through May (THK-photo, *DRP). One flew over Hartman Reserve in Cedar Falls on 16 May (*THK).

Bald Eagle: 50 were at L. Manawa on 7 Mar (BKP), and 61 were at Saylorville Res. on 14 Mar (BE). An adult and immature remained at Coralville Res. on 30 May (*DRP). There were 4 other May sightings.

Northern Harrier: 1 was late at Forney L. on 29 May (BKP).

Cooper's Hawk: 7 were reported with the last at Lacey-Keosauqua S. P. on 28 May (DRP).

Northern Goshawk: An adult was seen briefly in Kossuth Co. on 4 May (MCK).

Red-shouldered Hawk: Reports were from Boone, Hardin, Tama, Johnson, Cerro Gordo, and Marion counties.

Broad-winged Hawk: The first was on 15 Apr at Rock Creek S.P. (MPr). The peak was 40 in Kossuth Co. on 19 Apr (MCK). The last were at Lacey-Keosauqua S.P. on 27 May (DCP) and Waubonsie S.P. on 29 May (BKP).

Swainson's Hawk: The first was at Lime Creek C.A in Cerro Gordo Co. on 18 Mar (JLW-details)[ties earliest]. An incredible migration was noted starting with 18 in a plowed field and 10 more in other locations in SW Fremont Co. on 12 Apr (THK) and followed on 19 Apr with counts of 167 (DBi) and 218 (MMB) in Cherokee Co. Pairs returned to nest sites on 15 Apr in Mason City (JLW) and on 19 Apr in Waterloo (FLM). Copulation was observed on 28 Apr at the Mason City site (JLW). Among reports from 7 other counties, 1 in Appanoose Co. on 25 Apr (RLC) was away from the usual western and northern Iowa range.

Red-tailed Hawk: A Harlan's Hawk was at Union Slough N.W.R. on 15 Apr (MCK). In a correction from the fall 1991 report, the peak was 203 on 5 Oct at Grammer Grove; the figure of 561 was the total for 11 Sep through 30 Oct (BPr).

Ferruginous Hawk: A report will be referred to the Records Committee.

Rough-legged Hawk: An adult was in Winneshiek Co. on 24 May (RLC-details)[record latest].

Golden Eagle: 1 was still in Allamakee Co. on 1 Mar (MPr). An adult was seen in NE Cerro Gordo Co. on 10 May (*JLW)[record latest].

American Kestrel: Several observers noted up to 40 per day, but this was eclipsed by 79 in 130 miles in C Iowa on 22 Apr (MPr).

Merlin: The first was in Cerro Gordo Co. on 17 Mar (CN-details). The last was at Otter Creek M. on 11 May (CJB, THK)[ties 2nd latest]. Singles were reported at 6 other locations.

Peregrine Falcon: Migrants were noted from 12 locations with the last at Coralville Res. on 17 May (MPr)[3rd latest]. A male present at Davenport since winter attracted a female on 22 Apr, and incubation on a nest on the Centennial Bridge was suspected about 4 May (LSJ). An adult male and subadult female nested in downtown Des Moines; one of two eggs fell from the ledge on 7 May (LSJ). A male at Cedar Rapids attracted a female during the week of 10 May (LSJ). These nesting birds appeared to be banded; anyone who can read the numbers should report them to Laura Jackson.

Prairie Falcon: 1 was seen at Lakin Sl. on 24 Apr (EuA/EIA-details)[3rd latest].

Gray Partridge: 4 were at McPaul in SW Iowa on 22 Apr (BKP).

Greater Prairie-Chicken: Individuals from an introduced population were noted in southern Ringgold Co. on 11 Apr (JLF, FLM, THK) and 16 Apr (PCP).

Northern Bobwhite: 1 on 11 May in Mason City was a bit far north (CN).

Yellow Rail: The only report was of 1 at Otter Creek M. on 20 Apr (BPr).

Black Rail: 2 were studied on 26 Apr at "Carney M." s. of Ankeny (*BMi).

King Rail: 1 was heard at Otter Creek M. on 11 May (CJB, THK).

Virginia Rail: The first was at Cone M. on 4 Apr (AMJ-details, RA-details)[record earliest]. On 30 May, 2 were at White W.A. in Cerro Gordo Co. (JLW).

Sora: The first was in Boone Co. on 18 Apr (MPr).

Common Moorhen: The first was in Marshalltown on 23 Apr (MPr). The only other reports were from Cone M. on 27 Apr (JLF), Swan L. in Johnson Co. on 3 May (THK), and Princeton M. on 6 May (PCP).

American Coot: 800 were at Cardinal M. on 25 Apr (DeC). A "Caribbean Coot" was reported from Emmet Co. on 28 Apr (*HWW). It is rumored that the American Birding Association will drop this species from the North American list; meanwhile, the Records Committee is mulling over its occurrence in Iowa.

Sandhill Crane: 2 were present since at least early Apr at Otter Creek M. (Ed Weiner fide LJ). See summer report for exciting follow-up. The only other report was of 1 n. of Mason City on 13 May (CN).

Black-bellied Plover: Sightings were from 5 to 31 May.

Lesser Golden-Plover: The first was at Runnells A. on 29 Mar (JSi). The peak was 500 at Coralville Res. on 9 May (THK). The last were 3 in Cerro Gordo Co. on 27 May (RG).

Semipalmented Plover: The first was at Runnells A. on 16 Apr (JSi). The peak of 150 was at Runnells A. on 14 May (THK) and 19 May (AMJ). The last 2 were at Coralville Res. on 30 May (DRP, THK).

Snowy Plover: A male was at Riverton A. from 10 to 12 May (*DLR, *BJR-photo, *PA, RA-photo, *THK). A bird was reported there on 13 May (*MPr/BPr) may have been a female.

Piping Plover: 2 were at IPL Ponds by 17 Apr (BKP); 7 were there on 26 May (BKP). The only other locations were Saylorville Res. on 19 Apr and 5 May (BE) and Hendrickson M. on 2 May (MPr).

Killdeer: 150 were at Riverton A. by 1 Mar (JSi), and 2 had reached Kossuth Co. by that date (MCK).

Black-necked Stilt: A single bird was seen only on the afternoon of 12 May at Riverton A. (*PA, RA-photo, *AMJ, *THK).

American Avocet: The first was at Riverton A. on 12 Apr (THK)[2nd earliest], and the last was there on 30 May (BKP)[2nd latest]. Peaks were 30 at L. Manawa on 24 Apr and 11 at Riverton on 26 Apr (BKP). The only records east of the western border of the state were from NW Cass Co. on 24 Apr (MAP) and Lakin Sl. on 24 Apr (EuA/EIA).

Greater Yellowlegs: All reports were from April.

Lesser Yellowlegs: The first was at Cone M. on 28 Mar (THK), and the last was at Runnells A. on 27 May (JSi).

Willet: The first was at Colo Ponds on 24 Apr (HZ). The peaks were 19 in W Fremont Co. on 26 Apr (BKP) and 21 at Saylorville Res. on 2 May (BE). The last was at Runnells A. on 17 May (JSi). From 1 to 8 were at 7 other locations across the state.

Spotted Sandpiper: 3 were at Coralville Res. on 18 Apr (JLF)[ties 3rd earliest].

Upland Sandpiper: 1 was in Ringgold Co. on 10 Apr (PCP)[3rd earliest].

Whimbrel: Three sightings were of singles sw. of Liscomb on 24 Apr (*BPr)[2nd earliest], at Riverton A. on 11 May (*BKP), and at IPL Ponds on 26 May (*BKP)[ties latest].

Hudsonian Godwit: The first on 18 Apr were at Cone M. (THK) and Boone Co. (MPr). The peak was 159 at Riverton A. on 13 May (MPr). Singles on 30 May were at Riverton A. (BKP) and Runnells A. (AMJ). Others were reported from 7 other locations.

Marbled Godwit: Singles were reported from Forney L. on 12 Apr (THK), Marshalltown on 23 Apr (MPr), w. of Bagley on 25 Apr (EuA/EIA), McCord Pond on 9 May (AMJ), and IPL Ponds on 12 May (AMJ).

Ruddy Turnstone: Reports of 1-3 were from Cherokee Co. on 13 May (MMB), Saylorville Res. on 17, 23 May (BE), Riverton A. on 23 May (DRP, THK), Pleasant Creek L. on 24 May (JLF), and Runnells A. on 27, 30 May (JSi, AMJ).

Red Knot: 2 were in partial molt to alternate plumage at Riverton A. on 13 May (*THK, *JLF)[record earliest, 2nd spring record].

Sanderling: 2 were in Ida Co. on 13 Apr (PE), and 1 or 2 were at Saylorville Res. on 19 Apr and 3, 16 May (BE).

Semipalmated Sandpiper: At Riverton A. there was 1 on 12 Apr (THK-details)[2nd earliest], 4,000 on 23 May (THK), and 25 on 31 May (THK).

Western Sandpiper: 2 in alternate plumage were at Runnells A. on 19 May (AMJ-details).

White-rumped Sandpiper: The first were in Clay Co. on 4 May (LAS). The peak was 100 at Riverton A. on 31 May (THK).

Baird's Sandpiper: 100 were at Riverton A. on 12 Apr (THK). The last were in Cerro Gordo Co. on 27 May (RG).

Pectoral Sandpiper: The peak was 1,500 at Riverton A. on 13 May (THK), and 30 were still there on 31 May (THK).

Dunlin: 6 were at Runnells A. on 10 Apr (AMJ)[2nd earliest]. The last were at Saylorville Res. on 31 May (BE).

Stilt Sandpiper: Small numbers were reported from 11 to 23 May.

Buff-breasted Sandpiper: The only reports were of singles on 10 May e. of Riverton A. (DLR), 13 May at Riverton A. (THK), and 25 May at Coralville Res. (*DRP, THK)[2nd latest].

Short-billed Dowitcher: The first on 5 May was calling in Ida Co. (PE). The last were on 23 May at Riverton A. (DRP) and Coralville Res. (THK).

Long-billed Dowitcher: The first were 3 in Fremont Co. on 12 Apr (THK).

American Woodcock: The first were noted on 11 Mar at L. Manawa (BKP) and Grammer Grove (MPr). A brood was seen in Lee Co. on 23 Apr (Brian Warson fide SJD).

Wilson's Phalarope: Few were reported.

Red-necked Phalarope: A male was at Coralville Res. on 28 May (THK).

Franklin's Gull: 1 was still at Riverton A. on 31 May (THK).

Little Gull: An adult was seen in a flooded field nw. of IPL Ponds on 23 Apr (*BJR-photos, BKP).

Bonaparte's Gull: The first 2 were at L. Manawa on 17 Apr (BKP). The peak was 120 in Appanoose Co. on 21 Apr (RLC). The last were 25 in basic plumage at Pleasant Creek L. on 8 May (JLF).

Ring-billed Gull: 2,000 were at the Polk County Landfill on 14 Mar (RIC).

Great Black-backed Gull: A first-winter/first-summer bird was at Saylorville Res. on 7 Mar (*JSi).

Black-legged Kittiwake: A report is referred to the Records Committee.

Caspian Tern: The first were 2 at Montrose on 19 Apr (THK, RIC)[ties record earliest]. The peak was 17 on 13 May at IPL Ponds (THK), and 8 were there on 30 May (BKP).

Common Tern: Details were given for birds at Davenport on 6 May (PCP), at Lock and Dam 16 on 7 May (PCP), at Riverton A. on 13 May (MPr), and in Cerro Gordo Co. on 27 May (JLW).

Forster's Tern: The first was at Big M. on 10 Apr (DRP)[ties 2nd earliest]. Others were at Green Valley S.P. on 11 Apr (THK, MPr) and L. Manawa on 12 Apr (THK).

Least Tern: The first was seen at IPL Ponds on 17 May (BKP). Singles, presumably in migration, were noted at Zirbel Sl. on 20 May (CN) and Riverton A. on 27 May (EuA/EIA).

Black Tern: The first was at Cone M. on 3 May (THK). A peak of 150 was in Fremont Co. on 23 May (THK). At Riverton A., 12 were still present on 31 May (THK).

Black-billed Cuckoo: The first was on 10 May in Cedar Co. (JLF).

Barn Owl: The nest in Taylor Co. had 7 eggs on 11 Apr (PCP) and 7 young on 18 May (LSJ).

Snowy Owl: 1 was seen e. of Mason City on 1 Apr (JLW, RG)[3rd latest].

Long-eared Owl: 1 was reported from Union Slough N.W.R. on 24 Apr (Bobbi Webber fide MCK).

Short-eared Owl: 1 was at Ringgold W.A. on 11 Apr (THK).

Northern Saw-whet Owl: 1 was at L. Macbride on 7 Mar (JLF).

Common Nighthawk: 1 was at Lacey-Keosauqua S.P. on 4 May (DCP). A very early sighting was undocumented.

Chuck-will's-widow: Reports were of 3 at Waubonsie S.P. on 12 May (THK), 1 at L. Wapello in Davis Co. on 23 May (RLC), and 2 nw. of Eddyville in Mahaska Co. on 28 May (JLF).

Whip-poor-will: The first was in Lee Co. on 15 Apr (Brian Warson fide SJD). A bird in Cerro Gordo Co. on 8, 10 May was considered unusual (CN, JLW).

Chimney Swift: The first were in Des Moines on 15 Apr (RIC).

Ruby-throated Hummingbird: The first was at Lacey-Keosauqua S.P. on 4 May (DCP).

Northern Flicker: A red-shafted bird was in Grundy Co. on 26 Mar (MPr).

Pileated Woodpecker: Singles were in Des Moines on 1 Apr (JSi), Cedar Rapids on 25 Apr (JiD), and Saylorville Res. on 5 May (BE).

Olive-sided Flycatcher: The first was on 8 May in Appanoose Co. (RLC), and the last was on 27 May at the Runnels A. (JSi).

Eastern Wood-Pewee: The first was on 6 May in Cerro Gordo Co. (JLW).

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: An early bird was seen and heard on 7 May at Credit Is. (PCP) [ties 3rd earliest]. More than the usual number of reports described 18 birds from 12 locations, all of which were in E Iowa except for 1 in Ida Co. on 20 May (PE-details). The last was on 28 May in Cerro Gordo Co. (JLW).

Acadian Flycatcher: The first were on 9 May with 2 at Croton Unit of Shimek F. (THK) and 1 in Ida Co. (PE-details). Others were in Polk Co. on 20 May (PH) and at Grammer Grove on 30 May (MPr).

Alder Flycatcher: Extremely early for this late migrant was 1 on 2 May at Croton Unit Shimek F. (RLC)[record earliest]. Also early was 1 on 13 May at L. Manawa (BKP)[3rd earliest]. Additional reports were from 8 locations scattered throughout the state and were mostly single birds, but 4 were at L. Manawa on 21 May (BKP). The last was 1 on 30 May at L. Macbride (THK, DRP).

Willow Flycatcher: The first was on 11 May at Cone M. (JLF).

Least Flycatcher: The first was on 30 Apr in Ida Co. (PE). A bird singing continuously on 25 May at Coralville Res. may have been on territory (THK).

Eastern Phoebe: A nest at Lacey-Keosauqua S.P. with 5 eggs on 4 May was observed until the young filled the nest on 20 May (DCP).

Say's Phoebe: A report is referred to the Records Committee.

Western Kingbird: Away from its usual W Iowa range was 1 in Cerro Gordo Co. on 17-18 May (*CN, JLW-details).

Purple Martin: The first were 17 on 10 Apr at Algona (MCK) and 2 on 11 Apr in Union Co. (MPr).

Tree Swallow: The first was in Scott Co. on 17 Mar (PCP) [2nd earliest]. Other March sightings were on the 29th at Ventura M. (DRP) and Union Slough N.W.R. (MCK).

Northern Rough-winged Swallow: The first were on 11 Apr with 4 at Red Rock Res. (THK, FLM) and 10 at Ottumwa (DCP).

Bank Swallow: This species appeared early this year with 2 at Red Rock Res. on 11 Apr (THK, FLM) [record earliest], 2 at L. Manawa on 12 Apr (THK, FLM) [ties 2nd earliest], and 6 in Ida Co. on 15 Apr (PE).

Cliff Swallow: 25 nests were counted on the First Ave. bridge in Waverly on 18 May (MAP).

Barn Swallow: 1 at Otter Creek M. on 5 Mar (*MS) [record earliest] arrived with the warm weather of early March.

Tufted Titmouse: Out-of-range birds were in Ida Co. on 7 Apr (PE) and Boone Co. on 12-14 Apr (SRL).

Red-breasted Nuthatch: The reports were from Story Co. on 16 Mar (Lotus Miller fide HZ) and 17 Apr (PH).

Carolina Wren: This species continues to be widely seen with 12 reports of 1-5 birds. The only report from N Iowa was at Effigy Mounds N.M. on 8 Apr (DeC).

Bewick's Wren: 1 was at Croton Unit of Shimek F. on 8 May (THK), and 1 or 2 were in the campground at Lacey-Keosauqua S.P. on 9-28 May (*JLF, *DRP).

House Wren: The first were singles at Breton Sl. on 17 Apr (JiS) and Algona on 19 Apr (MCK).

Winter Wren: 2 were still at Kettleson Hogsback on 2 May (LAS).

Sedge Wren: The first were 2 on 9 May in Van Buren Co. (JLF) and 1 on 10 May at Riverton A. (BKP).

Marsh Wren: The first was at Otter Creek M. on 25 Apr (JLF).

Golden-crowned Kinglet: The first was on 19 Mar at Fairfield (DCP). The peak was 35 at the Coralville Res. on 6 Apr (DLD).

Ruby-crowned Kinglet: The first was on 1 Apr in Polk Co. (JiS). The peak was 48 at Coralville Res. on 6 Apr (DLD). The last were 2 on 14 May at Glendale Cem. (THK).

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: The first was on 12 Apr at Coralville Res. (DLD). There were 14 at Croton Unit of Shimek F. on 19 Apr (RIC).

Eastern Bluebird: More than usual were in Boone Co. in Mar (SRL), and 7 on 8 Mar at Kettleson Hogsback were considered early for NW Iowa (LAS).

Townsend's Solitaire: 1 was at Polk City cemetery on 17 May (*PH) [record latest].

Veery: The first was on 3 May in Ida Co. (PE-details) [ties 3rd earliest].

Gray-cheeked Thrush: The first was on 2 May at Lacey-Keosauqua S.P. (DCP-details).

Swainson's Thrush: The first was on 30 Apr at Fairfield (DCP-details). The peak was 20 on 8 May 20 at Lacey-Keosauqua S.P. (DCP) and on 14 May at Glendale Cemetery in Des Moines (THK). The last 2 were on 29 May at Waubonsie S.P. (BKP).

Hermit Thrush: The first was at MacIntosh Woods on 1 Apr (JLW).

Wood Thrush: The first was at Algona on 26 Apr (MCK).

American Robin: A partial albino with normal head color was in Boone Co. on 14 Apr (SRL).

Northern Mockingbird: Reports of 1-4 birds were from Johnson, Madison, Ringgold, Story, and Pottawattamie counties.

Brown Thrasher: 1 on 8 Mar was at the location at Zirbel Sl. where nesting occurred in 1991, and was possibly overwintering (JLW).

American Pipit: The first were 25 on 22 Mar at Runnels A. (JiS). April sightings were 1 at Cone M. on the 4th (JLF) and 6 at the Runnels A. on the 11th (PCP).

Cedar Waxwing: They were considered scarce in the NE (DeC).

Northern Shrike: 1 was at Princeton M. on 5 Apr (*DDo) [2nd latest].

Loggerhead Shrike: 6 were seen in Fremont, Mills, and Pottawattamie counties on 25 May (DRP). A nest with 7 eggs was in Iowa Co. on 16 May (HY).

White-eyed Vireo: The first were 2 on 24 Apr at Croton Unit of Shimek F. (RIC); There were 11 other reports of 18 birds, all from SE Iowa except for 1 at Desoto N.W.R. on 11 May (PCP).

Bell's Vireo: 1 was in Ida Co. on 30 Apr (PE) [3rd earliest]. Others were 2 at Riverton A. on 11 May (BKP) and 1 at Mason City on 28 May (JLW).

Solitary Vireo: The first was on 29 Apr at Grammer Grove (BPr). The last was on 14 May at Lakin Sl. (THK).

Philadelphia Vireo: The first was on 7 May in Ida Co. (PE). The last was at Hickory Hill P. on 20 May (THK).

Blue-winged Warbler: 2 were early on 20 Apr at Croton Unit of Shimek F. (RIC) [ties earliest], and 12 were there on 2 May (RLC).

Golden-winged Warbler: The first were 2 on 2 May in Lee Co. (RLC). The last were 1 at Kettleson Hogsback on 16 May (LAS) and a female at Hickory Hill P. on 18 May (DRP).

Tennessee Warbler: The first were 3 at Croton Unit of Shimek F. on 24 Apr (RIC). There were still 10 at Fairfield on 18 May (DCP).

Orange-crowned Warbler: All reports for this early migrant were in April, with early birds on 16 Apr in Polk Co. (JiS) [2nd earliest] and 18 Apr in Clay Co. (LAS) [ties 3rd earliest].

Nashville Warbler: 1 was still at Rock Falls on 31 May (RG) [2nd latest].

Northern Parula: The first was at Credit Is. on 30 Apr (PCP). There were 10 on 9 May at Lacey-Keosauqua S.P. where they nest (JiD). Two singing males were at L. Macbride on 30 May (*DRP).

Yellow Warbler: The first was on 26 Apr in Lee Co. (THK, RIC).

Chestnut-sided Warbler: The first was on 4 May at Lacey-Keosauqua S.P. (DCP).

Magnolia Warbler: 1 was still at Waubonsie S.P. on 29 May (BKP).

Cape May Warbler: The first were 4 on 14 May at Glendale Cem. in Des Moines (THK). Others were singles on 16 May at Hartman Res. (THK) and Kettleson Hogsback (LAS), on 17 May at Runnells A. (JiS) and Matsell Bridge in Linn Co. (JiD), and on 23 May at Liscomb (MPr) [ties latest].

Yellow-rumped Warbler: The first was on 3 Apr in Ida Co. (PE) The last was on 18 May in Iowa City (DRP).

Blackburnian Warbler: Reports from NW Iowa were 4 in Ida Co. on 15 May (PE) and singles on 16 May at Kettleson Hogsback (LAS), and 20 and 30 May at Trumbull L. (LAS).

Yellow-throated Warbler: The first was near Croton on 19 Apr (THK, RIC). Others were 2-4 at Lacey-Keosauqua S.P. on 2 and 30 May (DCP) and 9 May (THK), 2 in Des Moines on 4 May (PA/RA), 1 at Dawson in Dallas Co. on 6 May (PA/RA), 3 at Ledges S.P. on 9 May (HZ), and 1 at Dudgeon L. on 17 May (MCK, JLF).

Pine Warbler: The only reports were of singles at Scott Co. P. on 23 Apr (PCP) [2nd earliest] and Fairport Fish Hatchery on 6 May (PCP).

Prairie Warbler: A well-described male singing continuously was seen by many from 7 to 28 May at Croton U. of Shimek F. (*MJ, RIC-details, *JLF, *DRP).

Palm Warbler: The first was on 25 Apr at Iowa City (THK). The last was on 20 May at Trumbull L. (LAS) [3rd latest].

Bay-breasted Warbler: 2 at Hartman Res. on 16 May (THK) and 1 at Dudgeon L. (JLF) on 17 May were the only reports.

Blackpoll Warbler: The peak was 6 on 15 May in Ida Co. (PE). The last was at Coralville Res. on 24 May (JLF).

Cerulean Warbler: Very early were single birds on 18 Apr at Lacey-Keosauqua S.P. (RIC-details)[record earliest] and 19 Apr at Croton Unit of Shimek F. (RIC)[2nd earliest]. There were 9 birds at Effigy Mounds N.M. on 9 May (DeC).

Black-and-white Warbler: The first was on 29 Apr at Grammer Grove (BPr). The last was on 29 May at Waubonsie S.P. (BKP).

Prothonotary Warbler: This nester, common in its preferred habitat, was reported from all corners of the state. There were 3 pairs at Dudgeon L. on 16 May (DRP).

Worm-eating Warbler: 1 was seen and heard at Croton Unit of Shimek F. on 24 Apr (RIC) [2nd earliest] and on 3 May (RLC) and 19 May (JLF, THK). Another single was at Mark Twain N.W.R. in Louisa Co. on 13 May (PCP).

Ovenbird: 20 were counted at Lacey-Keosauqua S.P. on 4 May (DCP).

Northern Waterthrush: The first was on 26 Apr in Lee Co. (THK, RIC), and the last was on 19 May at the Runnells A. (JiS).

Louisiana Waterthrush: The first were 3 on 19 Apr at Croton Unit of Shimek F. (THK). Others were singles at Palisades-Kepler S.P. on 2 May (JLF) and 17 May (DRP), Lacey-Keosauqua S.P. on 4 May (DCP), and Waubonsie S.P. on 11 May (BKP).

Kentucky Warbler: 12 were in Lee Co. on 2 May (RLC). Other reports were 1-3 birds from Van Buren, Louisa, Lee, Polk, and Johnson counties.

Connecticut Warbler: There were 11 reports of single birds from across the state, with the first on 11 May in Grundy Co. (MPr-details) and the last on 21 May at Grammer Grove (BPr-details).

Mourning Warbler: This species arrived very early on 2 May at two locations: Nine Eagles S.P. (Tom Klubertanz fide JJD-details) and Hickory Hill P. (JLF-details) [record earliest]. From 1 to 3 birds were reported from 11 other locations. The last was on 31 May in Des Moines (PA/RA).

Hooded Warbler: There were two sightings on the unusually early date of 19 Apr -- a female at Hickory Hill P. (JLF) and 1 at Lamb's Grove (GJB-details) [record earliest]. Others were at Lacey-Keosauqua S.P. on 4 May (DCP), Ida Co. on 4 May (*PE), at Croton Unit of Shimek F. on 9 May (THK) and 28 May (DRP), and Yellow River F. on 23 May (FLM).

Wilson's Warbler: The first were 1 on 2 May in Warren Co. (AMJ) [ties 3rd earliest] and 1 on 3 May at Cone M. (THK). The last was on 26 May at Decorah (DeC).

Canada Warbler: The first was on 15 May at Hickory Hill P. (THK), and the last was at Croton Unit of Shimek F. on 28 May (DRP).

Yellow-breasted Chat: Sightings at Cone M. were 1 on 3 May (THK) [ties 3rd earliest], 3 on 11 May (JLF), and 1 on 21 May (DRP). Others were 2 in Warren Co. on 17 May (JiS), 1 at Hickory Hill P. on 18 May (JLF), and 1 at Croton Unit of Shimek F. on 28 May (DRP).

Summer Tanager: A molting male was at the Rosenberger suet feeder in Iowa City on 6-8 May (THK, JLF). There were 1 or 2 in the campground at Lacey-Keosauqua S.P., once seen eating scraps under a picnic table, from 9 to 28 May (JLF, DCP, DRP). Others were 1 in Marion on 11 May (JiD), 1 at Lakin Sl. on 12 May (EuA/EIA), and 2 at Lamb's Grove on 24 May (GJB).

Scarlet Tanager: Reports from NW Iowa were singles on 16 May at Kettleson Hogsback (LAS) and Cherokee (MMB).

Blue Grosbeak: A male was at the usual location near Croton on 3 May (EuA/EIA) [2nd earliest]. In Fremont Co., the first was on 10 May (BKP).

Indigo Bunting: A non-singing male appeared on 20 Apr in Lee Co. (RIC) [record earliest].

Dickcissel: The first was on 2 May in Johnson Co. (JLF). In Cerro Gordo Co. none were seen, and they were described as conspicuous by their absence (JLW).

Rufous-sided Towhee: 1 of the spotted race was in Des Moines on 1 May (PA/RA).

American Tree Sparrow: The last were 6 on 26 Apr in Marshall Co. (MPr).

Chipping Sparrow: 1 was singing on 26 Mar at Fairfield (DCP-details) [record earliest].

Clay-colored Sparrow: All reports were from early May with 1 at Hickory Hill P. on 1 May (THK, JLF), 1 in Marshall Co. on 2 May (MPr), 3 in Iowa City on 3 May (JLF), and 1 at De Soto N.W.R. on 7 May (JLF, THK).

Vesper Sparrow: The first were singles on 4 Apr at Cone M. (JLF) and in Boone Co. (SRL).

Lark Sparrow: The first were 2 on 18 Apr in Appanoose Co. (RLC) [3rd earliest].

Savannah Sparrow: 4 were at the Runnels A. on 16 Apr (JiS).

Baird's Sparrow: A report will be referred to the Records Committee.

Grasshopper Sparrow: The first were 2 on 18 Apr in Appanoose Co. (RLC) and 1 on 19 Apr in Lee Co. (THK).

Henslow's Sparrow: 1 was in a slough n. of Rock Falls on 4 May (CN-details). At least 3 were near Lacey-Keosauqua S.P. on 9 May (*JLF, m.ob.).

Le Conte's Sparrow: Reports were of 1 on 1 May at Trumbull L. (LAS), 1 heard before sunrise at Cone M. on 7 May (PCP), 1 in Ida Co. on 10 May (PE), and 2 at Lakin Sl. on 14 May (THK).

Fox Sparrow: The first were 6 on 6 Mar at Cone M. (THK). The last were 11 on 22 Apr at Rock Creek S.P. (MPr).

Lincoln's Sparrow: The first were 2 on 29 Apr in Wright Co. (DeC).

Swamp Sparrow: The first was on 1 Mar in Polk Co. (PA/RA).

White-throated Sparrow: May reports included 1 at Hickory Hill P. on 18 May (THK, JLF) and on 31 May at Fairfield (CAA).

Dark-eyed Junco: The last was on 10 May in Cerro Gordo Co. (JLW).

Lapland Longspur: 40 were in Grundy Co. on 17 Mar (MPr). The only others reported were in Johnson Co. with 1 on 3 Apr (JLF) and 75 on 4 Apr (AMJ).

Smith's Longspur: 1 was in Cherokee Co. on 4 Mar (*MMB) [3rd earliest]. In Johnson Co., 100 were found on 28 Mar (THK) and smaller numbers seen until 5 Apr (JLF, AMJ, DRP). The only other report followed the record late snowfall near Percival in Fremont Co. where 10 were seen on 22 Apr (BKP).

Chestnut-collared Longspur: Following the April snowfall in W Iowa, birds were found at two locations on the Missouri R. bottoms in Fremont Co. with 2 on 22 Apr (BKP) and 5-25 on 23 Apr (BKP, *BJR-photos)[record latest]. A road-killed specimen was sent to Iowa State University.

Bobolink: A male was in Johnson Co. on 23 Apr (JLF).

Yellow-headed Blackbird: 75 were near Lakin Sl. on 13 Apr (THK).

Rusty Blackbird: The first were 3 on 13 Mar in Cerro Gordo Co. (DRP).

Brewer's Blackbird: The first was a female with a dark eye on 4 Mar in Boone Co. (MPr). Only other March sighting was on the 7th when 2 were at Zirbel Sl. (JLW-details). Others were 1 in Warren Co. on 1 Apr (AMJ-details), 1 on 12 Apr at Coralville Res. (DLD), 11 males in Cerro Gordo Co. on 23 Apr (*DRP), and 10 at Colo Ponds on 25 Apr (MPr).

Great-tailed Grackle: The first was a male near L. Manawa on 24 Apr (BKP); 1 male and 5 females were there on 23 May (*DRP). Reports of 23 birds from 14 locations suggest that this species is expanding in numbers and range. From 1 to 8 birds were in Fremont, Pottawattamie, Guthrie, Greene, and Crawford counties. Unusually far east were a male in Louisa Co. on 30 Apr (*BO) and a male at Coralville Res. on 8 May (*JLF).

Brown-headed Cowbird: A flock of 350 in Warren Co. on 17 Mar had a 5:1 ratio favoring males (JiS).

Orchard Oriole: 8 in the same tree with 7 Northern Orioles in Lee Co. points to a migration fallout on 25 Apr (RIC) [2nd earliest]. Another peak was 6 on 20 May at Rock Creek S.P. (MPr).

Purple Finch: The last were 3 on 9 May at a Fairfield feeder (DCP).

House Finch: Nesting was reported from Cass Co. on 10 Apr (MAP) and Boone Co. on 1 May (SRL).

White-winged Crossbill: A male visited a feeder n. of Montrose from 23 Feb to 9 Mar (Margaret Bailey fide JLF).

Common Redpoll: 8-10 were at a feeder near Plymouth on 10 Mar (CN).

Pine Siskin: Still at feeders were 25 in Davenport on 7 May (PCP) and 11 in Mason City on 8 May (RG).

Evening Grosbeak: A female appeared briefly at a Marshalltown feeder on 17 Apr (Betty Savage fide MPr).

CONTRIBUTORS

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COMMENT

Swans are not only a difficult identification problem, particularly in first-year plumage, but they also present a problem of origin. Observers should provide as much detail as possible that might help in deciding whether a bird is wild. The presence of tags is obviously useful. Sometimes it is possible to tell whether Trumpeter Swans are from the Minnesota population, which are still considered introduced and not established in the wild, or from the South Dakota population, which are now considered wild. Jim Dinsmore described an untagged first-year bird in NW Iowa. Data such as this will be useful in determining when we should change the status of Trumpeter Swan from extirpated to regular. A Mute Swan was present

in NW Iowa through the end of the period. This would be a late date for a winter resident or migrant. In addition to knowing the plumage of the bird, it would be useful to know about tags, habitat, and whether it remained through the summer. Mute Swans are widely kept in captivity, so one could also ask people in the vicinity if they know where the bird came from. Obviously, we will not be able to determine the origin of every bird, but gathering information may lead to some useful conclusions.

Another continuing problem is what to do with birds reported at very unusual dates with no or fragmentary information. Is one field mark or sound identification enough to establish a record early date? Ideally, observers would be aware of unusual dates and provide full documentation. Should an undocumented early or late sighting be put into the record book while another is rejected based on a full documentation that indicates a suboptimal view? To what extent should the field reports editors try to judge the ability and experience of an observer? A full documentation usually eliminates these problems. In this report, we have not cited several record dates because of these problems. We have done this based on unusualness, difficulty of identification, and how well the observer is known to us. These decisions are always difficult and agonizing, but it seems better to abide by the principle, "If in doubt, leave it out" rather than include every record without question. One clear reason for leaving out an undocumented rare sighting is when the observer did not know that the bird or date were unusual.

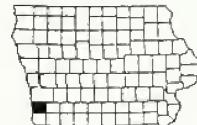
We received about the same amount of data as in previous years. The list of observers appears to grow longer. We thank every one for their input. We were not able to enter all of the data for reports received after June 6th.

211 Richards St., Iowa City, IA 52246, 6 Longview Knoll, RR #6, Iowa City, IA 52240, and 845 Cypress Ct., Iowa City, IA 52245

EURASIAN WIGEON AT RIVERTON WILDLIFE AREA

STEPHEN J. DINSMORE

At 10:35 a.m. on 6 March 1991 I saw a male Eurasian Wigeon at Riverton Wildlife Area in Fremont County. The bird was with a mixed flock of ducks, mostly Green-winged Teal. Only a few American Wigeon were present. The bird was the same size and shape as nearby American Wigeon. The head and neck were rufous-brown, much like the color of the head of a Redhead. The cap was a brighter buff color. The breast was also a light rufous color, paler than the head. The stubby bill was bluish-gray. The mantle, wings, and flanks were pale gray. The rump and undertail were black. In flight, the bird showed a large white patch on the secondary coverts and a dark-green speculum. The bird was not pinioned or banded, suggesting that it was of wild rather than captive origin.



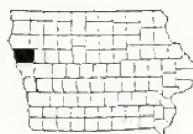
I watched the bird until 11:05 a.m. when I went to notify other birders. I returned at 12:05 p.m. with Ross Silcock, and we watched the bird until almost 12:30 p.m. Other birders were able to locate the bird later in the afternoon, but it was not seen on subsequent days. This is the fourth record of a Eurasian Wigeon in Iowa. Like two previous Iowa records, the bird showed up in spring and in the company of American Wigeon.

2600 Glen Burnie, Raleigh, NC 27607

BLACK-NECKED STILT IN WOODBURY COUNTY

BILL HUSER

Snyder's Bend, an oxbow lake of the Missouri River, had low water levels during the early spring of 1991. This left a band 5-8 meters wide of exposed sand and mudflats around much of the lake's perimeter. This seemed to be ideal foraging habitat for waders and shorebirds, the latter in most years discouraged by the steeper shorelines or cattails extending into rather deep water (0.5 m).



On 6 April 1991, my son Richard and I found that waterfowl, large waders, and pelicans were quite numerous there. While viewing shallow water areas near cattails for puddle ducks, I suddenly found a Black-necked Stilt in the field of my 32 power spotting scope. The identification was obvious, immediate, and astonishing. Similar species--if there really are any--were quickly eliminated. No avocet, oystercatcher, or phalarope combined the characteristics so evident in this starkly plumaged bird.

With the bird approximately 180 meters away in excellent, direct, frontal lighting, the following description was recorded: A large, long-legged black and white shorebird foraged in very shallow water and mudflats that were covered with mats of algae killed by the winter temperatures. The bird picked at these surfaces with quick motions, covering a good deal of territory with rapid, long-legged strides. The dorsal side was jet black and contrasted starkly with the bright white underparts. Exceptions to this pattern included a white spot over the eye and white at the bill base which contrasted with the black upper face. The legs were very long and bright pink; the bill long, straight, and black. In flight, the bird showed a black back and upper wings, offset by a white tail. The undersides of the wings were black, as well. Its size, gauged against the nearby Lesser Yellowlegs, was large, with linear dimensions, but not bulk, nearly equal to those of nearby Green-winged Teal.

Over the next eight days, I viewed the stilt on five more occasions, each time confirming the identifying characters. I was surprised to find that the bird used its long legs for striding and not for wading in the deeper waters inaccessible to other shorebirds. During this time several local birders and others from across the state viewed this bird. I took photos which did not approach my expectations and are barely diagnostic. I visited the area again on 19 April and could not locate the stilt. The reason for its disappearance was obvious; water levels had risen about one foot due to rising river levels and local rain. The numerous shorebirds of several species that had been present for several weeks were also absent.

Though a former channel of the Missouri River that determined the Iowa-Nebraska boundary passes through the lake, the portion of the lake frequented by the stilt is entirely within Iowa. The Nebraska portion of the lake lies a mere 200-300 meters to the west (Mark Hainfield pers. comm.). (Note the state boundary does not coincide with either the present river channel or the present lake bed.)

Black-necked Stilts are known to Iowa by 12 references prior to 1984. Each of those references, including two specimens, however, lacked details or adequate labels. Of six specific sightings, three are from the state's western tier of counties in the early 1900s (Dinsmore et al. 1984). But on 1-2 June 1984, a pair was located, documented, and photographed at Union Slough National Wildlife Refuge and accepted as Iowa's first official record (Dinsmore 1984).

The nearest known nesting site is in western Nebraska where breeding stilts were discovered in Garden County in 1985 (Helsing 1985). Having apparently bred in the vicinity each year since, the 1991 population included at least six adults with a

minimum of two nests, both failures due to predation and flooding (Mary Clausen pers. comm.).

Stilts have been recorded throughout South Dakota on the merits of seven reports since 1949. None of these reports mention breeding. Though the reports include May (2), June (1), July (2), August (1), and September (1) dates, none mentions more than one individual being present (South Dakota Ornithologists' Union 1991).

Eckert (1983) mentions one unacceptable Minnesota record, though South Dakota, North Dakota, and Wisconsin have valid records. Janssen (1987) lists no Minnesota stilt records.

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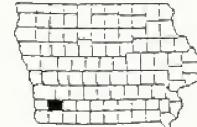
401 East 14th Street, South Sioux City, NE 68776

ROCK WRENS IN MONTGOMERY COUNTY

DAVID CARLISLE

On 17 September 1991, I was leaving my house in Red Oak about 7:50 a.m. when I noticed two birds inside my garage. Apparently the birds had entered the evening before when I had left the garage door open, or they came in through a small 1.5 x 2 inch opening in the weather stripping along the bottom of the garage door, the latter of which seems more likely. I had entered through the side door with the garage door still closed when I saw one of the birds attempting to exit through a closed window while the other was perched on the garage door tracks. I immediately identified both birds as wrens; however, they were larger than the common House Wren and lacked the light eye ring of that species. Fearing that the one bird which kept flying into the window was going to injure itself, I opened the garage door to allow them outside. One of the birds flew immediately out the opened door while the other kept flying into the window. I then grabbed my fishing net and snagged the other bird without any trouble.

With the bird in my possession, I immediately noticed the somewhat longer, buffy/light colored tail corners. Thoroughly confused, I took the bird to my pickup where I could use my Peterson field guide to aid me in identifying it. While referring to the field guide, I noticed that the bird lacked the definite eye stripe characteristic of the Bewick's, Carolina, and Marsh wrens. There were not white stripes on the back as



in the Marsh Wren, and it did not have the white outer tail feathers characteristic of Bewick's Wren.

Upon further observation, I looked for characteristics of the Rock Wren described by Peterson (1980). Having already noticed the buffy tail corners, I next noticed the presence of a finely streaked breast and the rusty rump, all characteristics of the Rock Wren. Furthermore, there are quite a few rocky outcrops along the small tributaries and rivers in the surrounding area; and there is a limestone quarry about 4 miles north of Red Oak which could provide adequate habitat for these birds.

According to Peterson (1980)(the only reference I had at the time I had possession of the bird), this species is accidental east of the Mississippi River; thus I assumed that this species was common in Iowa. That is where I made a very big mistake. Believing that I had stressed the bird enough (I had had it in my possession for about 10 minutes), I released it on the ground outside my garage without taking a picture (my second mistake). Fifteen minutes later, upon arriving at work, I checked the status of the Rock Wren in Iowa (Dinsmore et al. 1984). It was at this point I realized the rare occurrence of this bird in Iowa. I then went back to my house and, of course, could not find the bird anywhere. Through a couple of phone calls, one to Ross Silcock in Sidney and the other to a former teacher Dr. David Easterla at Northwest Missouri State University, I learned that there have only been a couple of documented sightings of this species in Iowa; however, this species was sighted and documented by Easterla in the Maryville, Missouri area, 60 miles south of Red Oak, in fall 1990.

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2000 Sunnyslope, Red Oak, IA 51566

A SECOND RED PHALAROPE AT SAYLORVILLE RESERVOIR

STEPHEN J. DINSMORE

At 10:38 a.m. on 4 August 1991, while birding the Saylorville Reservoir dam in Polk County, I saw a Red Phalarope in basic plumage. Throughout the observation, the bird swam a few feet off the rocky dam face, gradually working to the east. The stocky body, thin neck, small head, and swimming behavior easily identified the bird as a phalarope. Though there were no other birds for direct comparison, I estimated that the bird was about the size of a Pectoral Sandpiper. The bill was roughly equal to the length of the head and was bicolored; dark near the tip, gradually fading to a small, pale area at the base of the bill. There was a dark spot around each eye that extended forward to the base of the bill. The forehead, cap, and nape were also dark. The broad white supercilium was also seen. The throat, sides of the neck, breast, and flanks were white and marked with irregular buffy patches. The undertail coverts were also white. The mantle was mostly pale gray except for several small, scattered black spots. The wings were darker than the



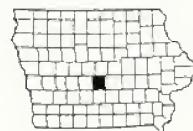
mantle with the primaries appearing black. The tail also looked black on the swimming bird. I was not able to observe the bird in flight. Separation from Red-necked Phalarope was based largely on bill shape and the unstreaked mantle. I concluded, on the basis of the pale gray mantle and bicolored bill, that the bird was an adult Red Phalarope that had nearly completed the molt to basic plumage.

I last observed the bird at 11:14 a.m. just before other birders arrived. The bird was not relocated, despite a thorough search of the reservoir that afternoon. This is the second acceptable record of Red Phalarope in Iowa. The first was of a juvenile bird at Saylorville Reservoir on 30 September-3 October 1988 (Dinsmore, S. J., and B. Engebretsen. *Iowa Bird Life* 59:19. 1989).

2600 Glen Burnie, Raleigh, NC 27607

TWO MORE RED PHALAROPES AT SAYLORVILLE RESERVOIR

MARK PROESCHOLDT



On 25 September 1991, I went to the Sandpiper Beach area of Saylorville Reservoir to see what birds might be there. After scoping over the gulls, terns, and shorebirds on this sunny, windy day, I noticed a very whitish shorebird floating in a corner of a small bay at the east end of the beach. As I slowly moved to get closer to this bird, I could tell it was a phalarope since it had a dark bar through and behind its eye.

The following description is compiled from my notes and notes of other observers. The phalarope had a rather thick, short, black bill which was different from the longer and more needle-like bills of both the Wilson's and Red-necked phalaropes. This bird had a light grayish back that was generally unmarked and had black showing at the wing edges along the flanks. It had a dark cap on its crown and a white forehead. The breast, belly, flanks, and undersides were very white. The sides of the neck were white with a rusty wash under its chin on its throat area. Its legs were fleshy pink in color. In flight, a very distinct wing stripe, a bold white V around a gray rump, and a black-gray terminal band on its tail were observed. It had the appearance of being short-necked and short-legged and appeared about the same size as a Pectoral Sandpiper. On close observation the back, wings, and tail were a contrasting gray and black pattern with white feather edgings on the gray feathers. This bird appeared to be in mid molt going to basic plumage. It was observed occasionally spinning and probing in the water at the pool's edge and walking along the shore. It was very tame and allowed very close approach. One observer speculated that it had never seen humans before and was therefore unafraid of people approaching it. The bird was present through 30 September, and many other birders were able to see it.

This is the third sighting of a Red Phalarope in Iowa. All have been at Saylorville Reservoir and all in fall migration. The first Red Phalarope sighting in Iowa was seen from 30 September to 3 October 1988 at the north end of the Saylorville Reservoir (Dinsmore, S. J., and B. Engebretsen, *Iowa Bird Life* 59:19, 1989). Iowa's second sighting of a Red Phalarope was seen by Steve Dinsmore on 4 August 1991, at the west overlook on the Saylorville Dam.

On 26 October 1991, another Red Phalarope was seen by a group of observers at Sandpiper Beach, Saylorville Reservoir. This was a very light-colored bird with a white neck, breast, and undersides. It was blackish along the wing edges at the flanks. It had two thin black lines that went the length of the back from the nape toward the



*Red Phalarope, Saylorville Reservoir,
28 Sep 1991. Photo by Tim Schantz*



*Red Phalarope, Saylorville Reservoir,
28 Sep 1991. Photo by Tim Schantz*

tail. It had a very noticeable light-grayish back. Its relatively short bill was very thick, stout, and black. It had a very black crown and a strong black bar through and behind the eye. In flight, it had a very distinctive wingstripe. This bird appeared to be almost into its basic plumage. The bird was running along the shore, later flew around, landed in the water off shore by a fishing boat, stayed there for a while, and then was gone. Based on its plumage differences, it was probably a different bird from the two reported earlier in the fall.

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TRICOLORED HERON IN POTAWATTAMIE COUNTY

JANET G. GREER

On 4 May 1991, Marge and Dutch Graf, Mary Jo Harlow, and I were participating in the Audubon Society of Omaha spring count. Upon our arrival at the Iowa Power and Light settling basins at 11:30 a.m., I noticed a medium-sized heron in the water near the rushes bordering the shore. It shortly flew away from the car, and I noted a stark white chin, slate-blue primaries and secondaries, and a rusty wash to the mantle and wing coverts. These characteristics convinced me that this bird was a Tricolored Heron.

The heron landed on the far shore of the settling basin and turned to face us. The entire belly and the upper part of the legs were stark white. The white extended up the flanks to the bend of the folded wings. As noted above, the chin was white in contrast to the dark of the entire face and crown. The long thin neck was mottled with rusty and white feathers. In addition, there were long rusty feathers on the breast. At the closest observation (75 feet), the distal one-fourth of both the upper and lower



mandibles appeared to be a different color than the base of the bill. The straight bill appeared long in proportion to the size of the bird. The legs, feet, and bill were a dark slate color. The bird appeared smaller than a Great Blue Heron, also present, although the two species were never side by side. At this time, the heron flew out of our range of vision.

We drove around the basins and relocated the heron standing on the fly-ash flat where we observed its behavior for almost an hour. The bird struggled to pick up a straight stick more than six feet long and carried it around over a large area of the fly ash. Several times the stick was dropped and picked up again. On several occasions, the heron approached a dead bush and shook it vigorously with its bill. After this, the bird would gently pick at the bush, thrusting its head at it. Often the heron stopped to scratch itself about the shoulders and neck with its foot. The bird was always active but it never approached the shore or resumed fishing while we watched.

We left the settling ponds to inform other birders about this bird but it was not relocated that afternoon nor on subsequent days. This is the second record of Tricolored Heron for Iowa and the first from the Missouri River Valley. The first was at Cone Marsh on 29 April 1989 (Kent, T. H., *Iowa Bird Life* 61:1-4, 1991).

341 Steven Circle, Council Bluffs, IA 51503

SECOND-YEAR GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL ON THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER

THOMAS H. KENT



On 14 January 1991, Jim Fuller found a dark-mantled gull on the Mississippi River in Bettendorf/Moline waters and reported it on the Birdline as a possible Lesser Black-backed Gull. On 15 January, Dick Tetrault and I found a dark-mantled gull there. Compared to Herring Gulls in the same field of view it was 30% larger, much darker backed, longer and thicker billed, longer legged making the bird stand taller, thicker legged (twice as thick as Herrings), and longer winged in flight. It had a long-necked, slender-headed, long-billed appearance. The bill was straight and mostly black with poorly demarcated light areas in the proximal one-third. The head and neck were white with dark eye, slight streak through the eye, and touch of gray on the posterior crown. The under parts were unstreaked white. The legs were a slightly darker pink than those of Herring Gulls. On the standing bird, the wings and back appeared rather uniform black-brown with indistinct feather edging. The primaries and tail band were black. The tertials and posterior scapulars were light gray, producing marks on the standing bird. In flight, the base of the tail was white and a terminal black band, which was indistinct proximally and thicker centrally, occupied about one-fourth of the tail. The outer primaries and their coverts were black, and I did not see any mirrors. The inner primaries, secondaries, coverts, and back were dark brown with thin feather edging. The trailing edge of the wing was pale. The underwing appeared medium neutral gray.

On 17 January, Jim Fuller saw the bird at closer range and recorded basically the same features. Other observers on the 15th and 16th recorded a gull with similar features but smaller in size. These observers came to different conclusions on the bird's identity; Western and Lesser Black-backed gull. On 7 and 8 February, Steve

Dinsmore and Ann Johnson described a similar dark-mantled gull at Keokuk and concluded that it was a Great Black-backed Gull.

In analyzing these various sightings, all agree that the bird was dark-mantled, meaning that the bird could be Great Black-backed, Lesser Black-backed, Slaty-backed, Western, or Yellow-footed gull. The next consideration is whether they represent one or more birds. All of the descriptions indicate a second-winter bird. First-winter birds of these species have a checkered or brownish plumage, secondary bar, no gray/black in the mantle, all black bill, and extensive tail band. Third-winter birds have a minimal tail band, developing mirrors, much less dark in the bill tip, and upper wing and back similar to an adult. Further, this second-winter gull did not look like any of the pictures or drawing in the field guides or reference books. It is a individual with its own features. There are a number of points of similarity in the six documentations: dark tip and light base to bill, white head with light streaking/smudging around eye, black wing tips without mirror, back-scapulars-inner wings brown-black with edging, no secondary bar, no distinctive features on underwing, black tail band, and pink legs (pinkish-yellow in one documentation).

I concluded that all of the sightings were of a second-winter Great Black-backed Gull. The unusual age (only third-year would be less likely) and similar odd features noted in the documentations make it unlikely that more than one bird was observed. It is not uncommon for immature gulls to have very individualistic features, especially when molting. If only one bird were present, how could two of six observers judge the size differently. Peter Grant and Killian Mullarney ("The New Approach to Identification", Peter Grant: Ashford, England, 1989) suggest some answers, which may or may not apply to this situation. They note that the perception of size is usually based on the identification that is made, "It's a Barred Warbler, so it's Barred Warbler sized". If a bird is misidentified, it will automatically look "the right size". Another source of error is that binoculars and telescopes make the farther of two objects look larger than it really is in comparison to the nearer object. Even when gulls are sitting together, judging size is very difficult and not very reliable.

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LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL AT SABULA

JIM AND KAROLE FULLER

On 10 March 1991, while on a weekend outing along the Mississippi River, we were looking over a group of about 200 gulls standing on ice of a partially frozen backwater/harbor at Sabula in Jackson County. A dark mantled adult gull stood out from the rest of the gulls which all had gray upperparts. We obtained excellent looks with the KOWA TSN-4 telescope at about 150 yards with the midafternoon sun at our backs, and identified the bird as an adult Lesser Black-backed Gull in breeding plumage.

The dark bird was slightly larger (maybe 10-15%) than any of the Ring-billed Gulls, and about the same amount smaller than the Herring Gulls. At one time, this bird was in the middle, with a bird of each of the other species on either side five feet away.

The mantle was dark gray (not jet black). The bill was yellow, with a red spot on the lower mandible a third of the way from the tip, and otherwise was proportionately



similar to the bill of the other two species. The head, neck, and underparts were snow white, lacking the neck streaking that winter adults normally exhibit, which may be explained by the late winter date. The legs were bright yellow, like that of the ring-bills. We never did see the bird fly and didn't think to flush it.

All other dark-mantled gulls have pink legs, except Yellow-footed Gull, which has never been seen away from extreme southwest California, and should be noticeably larger than Lesser Black-backed Gull. The European race of Herring Gull has yellow legs, but is larger and gray-mantled.

The first acceptable record for Lesser Black-backed Gull in Iowa was 1-5 December 1984 in Marion County below the Red Rock Reservoir dam (Kent, T. H., and J. Bowles, *Iowa Bird Life* 55:21-22, 1985). There have been more than a dozen sightings since, and with the exception of one May record, all occurred during the late fall and winter.

6 Longview Knoll, NE., Iowa City, IA 52240

I.O.U. BUSINESS BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

Mount Ayr, 11 April 1992, 11 a.m.-2 p.m.

Hilda A. Sickels, Secretary

Members present: Ann Barker (presiding), Bob Cecil, Diane Porter, Mark Proescholdt, Rick Hollis, Hilda Sickels.

Others present: Tom Kent, Francis Moore, Jim Fuller, Jim Scheib, Ann Johnson, Beth Brown.

The minutes of the 7 December 1991 board meeting were approved as distributed with one correction (motion by Porter, seconded by Cecil).

Reports

Treasurer: Allen distributed a complete financial statement for 1991 including a balance sheet, a statement of support, revenues, expenses, and membership information. Membership increased as a result of responses to the bird feeder survey (1300 participants). New checklists have been printed. It was moved (Sickels, seconded by Hollis) that checklists sell for 20 cents each or 6 for \$1. Motion carried. Tee shirts with the IOU logo have been reordered. It was moved (Cecil, seconded by Hollis) to sell them for \$10. Motion carried.

Records: Annual reports through 1990 have been published in *Iowa Bird Life*. Nearly all 1991 records have been reviewed. The committee is doing a commendable job.

Membership: The committee has considered ways to encourage new members. Suggestions from board members included offering beginning birding workshops and childrens programs. Bob Cecil is arranging a session on fundamentals of birding for the fall meeting.

Publications: The committee will meet at the spring meeting. The annual report for Iowa Bird Life was distributed. Journal expenses for 1991 were very close to budget.

Library-Historical: No report.

Big Day: Ray Cummins has sent out forms for 1992 participants.

Breeding Bird Atlas: Cecil reported that species accounts are being compiled. When map production is completed, the book will be ready for final processing. The committee is looking for ways to subsidize publication costs. Projected price of the book without support is \$60. The board encouraged the committee to continue to explore fundraising ideas.

Education: Hollis indicated that the booklet on birds will be ready for printing by late summer.

Spring Bird Count: No progress report has been submitted from the committee since it was formed in September. The Board reiterated its concern about publication space and costs, compilation time, and the lack of a plan for the project. At the Board's suggestion, the President will dissolve the present committee. A new committee will be appointed to formulate a specific plan for a spring bird count including methods for submitting reports and compiling and publishing the results. Cost estimates should be included in the plan. The North American Migration Count proposal was discussed briefly but no immediate interest in it was evident.

Nominating: The committee has nominated the following slate of candidates for consideration at the spring meeting: Secretary-Hilda Sickels, Treasurer-Pam Allen, Board of Directors-Eloise Armstrong and Rick Hollis.

I.O.U. Display: Hollis reported the display is being used often and traveling well. It will be at the American Ornithologists' Union meeting in Ames in June.

Birdline: The annual report from Jim Fuller will be published in I.O.U. News. Use was up significantly from 1990 and updates are more frequent. Jim Scheib presented a proposal that would provide access to birding information from across the country on computer bulletin boards. It was moved (Hollis, seconded by Porter) to publicize it at the spring meeting, set up a demonstration for the fall meeting, and assess the level of interest in the membership. Motion carried.

Old Business

Upcoming meetings: The spring meeting will be hosted by the Cedar Rapids Audubon Society at Camp Io-Dis-E-Ca on 15-17 May. Plans are in progress for the fall meeting in northeastern Iowa on 11-13 September. Cecil is investigating facilities for holding the spring 1993 meeting in southeastern Iowa. The possibility of holding the fall 1993 meeting in northwestern Iowa, perhaps near Union Slough was discussed. Looking ahead, the Board would like to see the spring 1994 meeting in central Iowa, perhaps near Ames. Cecil will follow up.

Field Trips: I.O.U. field trips have been popular and well attended. Possibilities for future trips were discussed including northeastern Iowa in November and the Mt. Ayr area in June.

A letter to owners of restricted sites requesting access for I.O.U. members for birding drafted by Jim Fuller and Rick Hollis was circulated. Hollis will personalize the letter for each site. The Board agreed that Hollis should send the letters when they are finished.

Hollis is also drafting a birding code of ethics patterned after the A.B.A. code. He will present it to the Board for possible recommendation to the membership.

Shared costs reimbursement was discussed at length. Costs such as computer hardware, software, and supplies are paid by the Records Committee Secretary, *Iowa Bird Life* editor, *I.O.U. News* editors, field reports editors, and the Treasurer. Cecil contacted other similar organizations and found that most did not have a formal reimbursement policy for such costs. Some Board members felt that these expenses should be reimbursed. The amount and verification of expenses was discussed. It was moved (Hollis, seconded by Cecil) that the Treasurer, all editors, and the Records Committee Secretary meet to discuss the matter and make specific recommendations to the Board on reimbursement. The motion carried. Bob Cecil will set up the meeting.

The American Ornithologists' Union will meet in Ames on 24-27 June. Board members were encouraged to attend.

New Business

The dues structure for 1993 was discussed. It was moved (Cecil, seconded by Porter) to recommend to the membership that the current dues structure be maintained. Motion carried.

A tourist group promoting birding in northwestern Minnesota has contacted the I.O.U. to purchase our mailing list for a targeted mailing. Whether to sell the list to commercial enterprises, academic publishers, or both; if lists should be sold for one mailing or for unlimited access, and the cost were all discussed. The issue was tabled until a straw poll of the membership can be taken at the spring meeting.

Announcement: A life member of the I.O.U., Dr. Myrle Marie Burk, died on 30 March 1992.

CORRECTION

One column of data (for the Ring-billed Gull) in the Christmas Bird Count table 2B (I.B.L. 62:42) was inadvertently left out when the issue was printed. The missing data are as follows: Clinton-1,352, Princeton-44, Davenport-2,123, Muscatine-240, Oakville-78, Burlington-8,180, Keokuk-13,000, Miss. River subtotal-25,017; Omaha-63, Missouri River subtotal-63; Cedar Rapids-5, Iowa City-29, Alleman-9, Saylorville Res.-242, Des Moines-305, Boone Co.-2, Middle Third subtotal-592; Ottumwa-68, L. Red Rock-3,090, Rathbun-3,651, Southern Third subtotal-6,809; state total-32,481. I regret any inconvenience this causes readers.--J.J.D.

